

Message Text

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PAGE 01 RANGOO 02168 270330Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-13 OMB-01 /070 W

-----089989 270418Z /17

R 270205Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3876

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 2168

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, BM

SUBJ: PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY TO HOLD SESSION IN AUGUST

1. SUMMARY: THE PYITHU HLUTTAW (PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY) WILL OPEN ITS NEXT SESSION ON AUGUST 25, AN UNUSUALLY EARLY DATE FOR THIS EVENT WHICH NORMALLY TAKES PLACE IN OCTOBER. THE PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE WILL PRBABLY MEET JUST PRIOR TO THE SESSION. THIS MEETING HAS FUELED RUMORS OF PENDING CHANGES OF HIGH-LEVEL GUB PERSONNEL. HOWEVER, WE HAVE NOTHING TO SUBSTANTIATE THESE RUMORS. THE MAJOR LEGISLATION TO BE CONSIDERED SEEMS TO BE A BILL TO DEFINE THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR. END SUMMARY.

2. BURMESE PRESS ANNOUNCED THAT THE PYITHU HLUTTAW WILL HOLD ITS NEXT SESSION BEGINNING AUGUST 25. THIS IS AN UNUSUALLY EARLY DATE FOR THIS SESSION WHICH NORMALLY IS HELD IN LATE OCTOBER. RUMORS OF TOP-LEVEL PERSONNEL CHANGES IN THE GUB AND OF A REFT BETWEEN PRESIDENT NE WIN AND HIS HEIR APPARENT, GENERAL SAN YU, CONTINUE TO DOMINATE RANGOON'S RUMOR MILLS, AND THE DATE OF THE UPCOMING SESSION HAS SERVED TO ADD FUEL TO THESE STORIES. MOST OF THE RUMORS CLAIM THE PERSONNEL CHANGES ARE SPARKED BY PERSONALITY CLASHES OR PERSONAL AMBITION AND NOT BY ANY MAJOR DEBATE WITHIN GUB OVER POLICY MATTERS. SO FAR THERE ARE NO HARD FACTS TO SUBSTANTIATE ANY

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 RANGOO 02168 270330Z

OF THE STORIES. MOREOVER, WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY HIGH-RANKING GUB OFFICIALS, INCLUDING MILITARY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT COL. TIN OO, THAT THERE IS NO SUBSTANCE TO THE RUMORS OF DRAMATIC PERSONNEL CHANGES, AND SPECIFICALLY THAT SAN YU IS NOT RPT NOT IN TROUBLE.

3. NORMALLY A PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING TAKES PLACE

A FEW DAYS IN ADVANCE OF AN ASSEMBLY SESSION, AND ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT, WE ASSUME THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE WILL MEET PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED ASSEMBLY SESSION. ACCORDING TO SOME RELIABLE SOURCES, THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE WAS SCHEDULED TO MEET IN LATE JULY, BUT THIS MEETING WAS POSTPONED DUE TO VISITS TO BURMA BY THE BANGLADESH PRESIDENT AND THE JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER.

4. MOST SOURCES AGREE THAT THIS SESSION WILL FINALLY GET AROUND TO CONSIDERING THE "PRIVATE ENTERPRISES BILL," LEGISLATION THAT WOULD DEFINE THE RIGHTS AND LIMITS OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE IN BURMA AND OFFER THE PRIVATE SECTOR SOME GUARANTEE AGAINST NATIONALIZATION. THE LAST TWO PYITHU HLUTTAW SESSIONS POSTPONED CONSIDERATION OF A DRAFT LAW ON THIS MATTER, AND ONE WELL-PLACED SOURCE TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT HE DOUBTED THAT IT WOULD BE PASSED AT THE UPCOMING MEETING.

5. THE EMBASSY WILL REPORT FURTHER ON DETAILS OF THE UPCOMING SESSION AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE.
BARTLEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, MEETINGS, PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT, PUBLIC ATTITUDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977RANGOO02168
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770267-0312
Format: TEL
From: RANGOON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770711/aaaaajmv.tel
Line Count: 82
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d9f8f662-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01-Apr-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1728607
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY TO HOLD SESSION IN AUGUST
TAGS: PINT, BM
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d9f8f662-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009